

Mr. Ickes's spokesman says he has no recollection of such a call, and that Mr. Ickes did not attempt to pressure the department to kill the project. Another aide to Mr. Ickes, Jennifer O'Connor (no relation to Patrick O'Connor) did make what the spokesman calls routine status inquiries to Interior about the project.

The day the Wall Street Journal article appeared, July 12, 1996, Shea wrote another memo about Hudson, this time to White House Press Secretary Michael McCurry, which was copied to Ickes. The memo provides "brief talking points" from which McCurry could answer press questions in the wake of the Wall Street Journal article. The memo notes that "DNC Chair Don Fowler has stated that he spoke to Harold about this issue," and that while Ickes did not dispute the fact that he may have spoken to Fowler about Hudson, Ickes had no recollection of speaking to Secretary Babbitt about Hudson. The memo also states that Jennifer O'Connor made "routine status inquiries throughout the course of the decision-making process."

The assertion in Shea's memo, based on his discussion with Jennifer O'Connor about the Hudson matter, that her status inquiries were "routine" and were made "throughout the course of the decision-making process" is inconsistent with Jennifer O'Connor's subsequent position. O'Connor told investigators that she was absolutely sure she did not make "routine status inquiries throughout the decision-making process."⁶⁰³ O'Connor also said that the request from Fowler pursuant to which she made the inquiries was unusual, not routine. Moreover, O'Connor could recall only two conversations with Interior staff about Hudson.

⁶⁰³OIC J. O'Connor Int., April 2 and 9, 1999, at 14.